3: Anonymous U-4 (no date) 1920 RH1 Caucasia RH1

prices. Special varieties of conifers, birch, oak, and palm grow in the Caucasus. The Caucasus palm or *samshita* is not plentiful, but is greatly valued. The commonest tree is the beech, which occupies 25 per cent. of the total forest area; the oak occupies 16·7 per cent. and the pine 8·1 per cent. Plantations of bamboo at Chavka and Sukhum have been very successful, the cane being used for industrial purposes. 137

The Italian firm of Sbrajavacca was in 1914 exploiting the pine-forests of Svanetia and Ratce, the timber being floated down the river Rion. The firm has saw-mills at Socilava and Poti. 313 471

The Russian State levied on all timber a royalty varying according to the kind of wood, &c. The State also fixed the amount of timber to be felled in each area, which was then sold to the highest bidder. The total amount of timber which might be cut in the Caucasus was fixed in 1913 at nearly 220,000,000 cubic feet, of which only a little more than a quarter was actually delivered. [659]

(*d*) *Land Tenure*

The Caucasus as a whole has no fixed system of land tenure, nor are any of the characteristic Russian features of land-holding found there. The various kinds of landowner may be divided into six classes: the old nobility of Georgia; Tatar and Armenian peasant holders; nomad pastoral tribes, who occupy large areas of steppe land, especially in Stavropol Province; Russian settlers, placed on land vacated after the conquest; the Russian State, which owned large areas, mainly forest; and the Imperial family, which had acquired valuable appanages in the Caucasus. 423 471

No figures are available to show the proportions in which the land is held by these various owners; and, as a large part of the total productive area is occupied by nomads, no exact statistics would be possible. Moreover, recent events have to a great extent obliterated the old divisions, and new claims to ownership of much valuable land will have to be settled in the course of time.

5: Allen H-4 (no date) 1923 RHI Caucasia RHI

with the repression of national minorities, tended to form among the Russian and Armenian workmen in Tiflis and Batum a Bolshevist minority.

The only result of the Revolution which appears likely to be permanent are the measures which expropriated the landowners and gave possession of the land to the peasants.

This agrarian revolution was effected by a decree of the Transcaucasian Commissariat (December 16, 1917) which alienated from the original landowners all property over a certain fixed average (about 19 acres of land under intensive culture, vines, tobacco, cotton, etc.; about 41 acres of land under cereals; about 109 acres of pasturage) and appointed local commissions to supervise the division of the land confiscated among those holding less than the scheduled acreage, and among the majority who had hitherto been employed on the land only as paid labourers. In Georgia this agrarian revolution was carried out almost without bloodshed, for whilst many of the largest landowners were Russian Grand Dukes and officers absent from the Caucasus or impotent to protest, the native aristocracy wisely gave their approval to the measure.

In the Tatar districts the change was by no means recognised, and in many parts the begs, supported by the influence of the mullahs, succeeded in maintaining their position.

Conclusion.—The economic and social future of the Caucasus is necessarily involved in that of Russia, and the Soviet system of government is being introduced into the Caucasus, in conformity with that of Russia. It is consequently impossible to give here any present financial or commercial details of permanent value. Two points are, however, evident. Firstly, if the industries of the Caucasus—petroleum and manganese—are to be revived, and if its natural resources—copper, timber, water-power and agriculture—are to be developed, such modifications must of necessity be introduced into the social and industrial organisation as will afford to foreign capital some confidence of security of tenure and of amicable relations with labour. Lastly, the development of relations between the Soviet bureaucracy and the peasantry—who in the Caucasus, as in Russia, form the overwhelming majority of the population—must be considered. The peasantry certainly would not hesitate to resist any attempt to modify the terms of their tenure of the land, and the Bolsheviks will scarcely be prepared to risk an issue with them. It remains to be seen whether the efficiency of the young Jewish agri-

Ca. 175 177 actions against the Turks. An Ossetin Major-General, K. Zankisov, fought in Poland against the insurgents of 1863–4 and he was by no means the only Ossetin Major-General of that epoch. Furthermore, an 'Ossetin Division' became famous in the course of the Russo-Turkish War in 1877–8, when General Skobelev described its 'chivalrous gallantry' as being 'above any praise'.[12]

Ca. 177 538 Russian cultural work among the Ossetins started much earlier than among other mountain peoples. The first book to appear in the Ossetin language was printed in Moscow in 1798; its object was to serve as a kind of introduction to the study of the Bible. A long period of fruitful association with the Russians and the general peaceful approach of the Ossetins towards Russian military and political rule made them more open to the acceptance of Russian preponderance. The Ossetins were, as a matter of fact, the only people of the Northern Caucasus to produce a great writer in the person of Kosta Khetagurov (1859-1906) who was half Russianized himself and wrote in both the Ossetin and Russian languages. The Soviet régime greatly popularized Khetagurov as a symbol of Russian-Ossetin synthesis, which he undoubtedly was. He had a complete Russian education, had studied at St. Petersburg and was strongly influenced by such progressive Russian writers as Herzen and Chernishevsky, which makes him particularly acceptable from the Soviet point of view.

Ca. 423 668 474 691 Until the Ossetins gave proof of their loyalty to Russia during the war the Soviet régime had had to overcome Ossetin resistance to both the establishment of collective farms and the suppression of tribal customs. During the period of the collectivization Ossetin peasants waged a sort of guerilla warfare against 'socialist property' and while outwardly accepting collectivization, tried to transform the Kolkhoz into an instrument of their respective clans. Ossetin chairmen of collective farms and officials of local Soviets seem to have acted on the principle 'I decide who is a kulak and an enemy of the State and who is not'. Thus, at least during its initial stage, collectivization in Ossetia became a downright farce. Persons belonging to a rival clan were rendered innocuous by being denounced as kulaks; real kulaks, on the other hand, were promoted to the rank of respectable Soviet citizens if they happened to belong to the clan dominating the local village council or the collective farm concerned.[13]

Ca. [725] 631 143 S.U. 563 634 All such 'incidents' were forgotten when the Ossetins redeemed their reputation by their brilliant war record. In the fighting which resulted in the dislodgement of the Germans from the approaches to the Caucasus, Ossetin partisans operating from behind the enemy lines greatly assisted the Red Army.[14] As a mark of appreciation for their loyalty, the Soviet Government allowed the Ossetins to increase substantially the territory of their national republic. A decree of April 8th, 1944, stipulated